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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 04 UNVIE VIENNA 000530

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SUBJECT: IAEA/IRAN: TECHNICAL BRIEFING LARGELY FOCUSES ON
QOM

Classified By: Ambassador GLYN DAVIES for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

Summary

¶1. (C) On November 18, Ops B Director Herman Nackaerts provided Member States a technical briefing on the Director General's (DG) November 16 report on Iran. The briefing largely repeated the points covered in the report, but also offered more details on the IAEA's inspection of the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant near Qom. Nackaerts also restated that Iran has not shown any cooperation on possible military dimensions (PMD), has not suspended enrichment- and heavy water-related activities, has not implemented the Additional Protocol (AP), and reiterated that Iran's continued failures on Code 3.1 modified were "inconsistent with its obligations under the Subsidiary Arrangements to its Safeguards Agreement."

¶2. (SBU) Member states asked several questions during the question and answer session about the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant and the discovery of heavy water at the uranium conversion facility at Esfahan. DCM queried the IAEA regarding the newly declared underground laboratory at Esfahan, and also asked about any safeguards implications regarding the report that Iran is moving equipment from Natanz to Fordow, as well as about IAEA plans for taking forward the PMD investigation. Iranian Ambassador Soltanieh again used the technical briefing as a platform to claim Iran was cooperating with the IAEA as required by its comprehensive safeguards agreement and to criticize the IAEA's handling of the investigation and mishandling of sensitive Iranian information, claiming the latter has led Fordow to now become a military target of Iran's enemies.
End Summary.

Nackaerts Describes Qom

¶2. (C) On November 18, Safeguards Ops B Director Herman Nackaerts provided Member States a technical briefing on the Director General's (DG) November 16 report on Iran. As in past technical briefings he repeated points covered in the DG's report, but also described in additional detail the IAEA's visit to the Fordow Fuel Enrichment Plant (FFEP) near Qom, which he noted Iran designates as a production plant and not a research and development (R&D) facility. Nackaerts was very complimentary when describing Iran's cooperation with the Qom inspection, stressing "Iran has really been cooperative with us in providing unimpeded access to all areas of the facility."

¶3. (C) Nackaerts indicated that the FFEP will house 2 units of 8 cascades that will equal approximately 3000 centrifuges. He said there will be one feed and withdrawal station per unit. A 30 B cylinder will be used to feed the material and

a 12 B cylinder will be used to collect the product and tails. After describing Iran's responses to the purpose and time of construction of the FFEP, as reflected in the DG's report, Nackaerts provided the following chronology of the development of the facility from the IAEA's imagery findings:

- May 2002, tunneling activities observed
- June 2004 pause in tunneling activities
- October 2006 tunneling activities resume and auxiliary openings observed
- February 2007 tunneling activities observed and concrete batch plant seen
- December 2007 excavation of the service support buildings
- August 2009 entrance portals and service building externally complete
- October 2009 IAEA performs DIV

14. (C//NF) In addition, Nackaerts noted that 3rd parties had provided the IAEA with information that showed the FFEP designs dated September 2006 as well as imagery of tunneling activity also dated September 2006. Because the IAEA intends to establish the clear precedent regarding Iran's obligation to now allow regular access to the FFEP (the IAEA intends to visit on a monthly basis), Nackaerts reported the IAEA will perform a second design information verification (DIV) inspection on November 19. Nackaerts concluded with two slides, the first listing areas in which Iran had cooperated, the second listing (many more) areas in which Iran had not. The first slide noted Iran's cooperation on access to all operating facilities and to IR-40, preliminary DIV on Darkovin and notification of the Fordow facility. The slide on non-cooperation specified the continuing need for :

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clarification of timing and purpose of Fordow, written confirmation as to no other undeclared facilities, implementation of Code 3.1. modified, suspension of enrichment- and heavy water-related activities, implementation of the Additional Protocol, and substantive engagement on PMD. (Comment: This effort to appear even-handed gives grist to those on the Board who argue that putting additional pressure on Iran could lead Tehran to stop its current "cooperation." Soltanieh was certainly playing to this audience during the question and answer session when he threatened to reconsider Iran's cooperation in light of the Secretariat's supposed mishandling of sensitive information from Iran. End comment.)

Soltanieh Tells IAEA It Has No Right
to Be "Happy Or Sad" About Iran's
Nuclear Program

15. (C) After Nackaerts' presentation, there was a question and answer session in which Iranian Ambassador Soltanieh kicked things off with his usual breathless critical commentary devoid of any actual technical questions. Soltanieh's response to the Secretariat's briefing started out in a relatively calm tone, but--true to form--became increasingly agitated as his rant continued. He took issue with the details contained in the report and the technical briefing, noting that these details should be kept confidential. He threatened that continued IAEA disclosures might cause Iran to reconsider its level cooperation with the Agency since, he claims, Iran is cooperating voluntarily and beyond its obligations.

16. (C) Soltanieh said that revelation of technical details has led to additional pressure on Iran and has put Iran's "peaceful" nuclear facilities, including Qom and Darkhovin, under threat of attack. (Note: It is not clear how Darkhovin could be under threat since it has not yet been built. End Note.) Soltanieh also argued that the Agency has no right to pass judgment on the rationale/purpose of Iran's nuclear

program, that Iran's intentions are not subject to review under its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, and thus, are not subject to investigation by the IAEA. The IAEA should not express that it is "happy or sad" about information or what the inspectors have seen in Iran. Soltanieh said even though the inspectors had no right to talk to Iranians about their intentions for the program, he had instructed everyone the inspectors spoke with to answer any questions that the inspectors asked (thus demonstrating Iran's cooperative attitude).

¶7. (C) Soltanieh again rejected Iran's Code 3.1 modified obligations as described by Nackaerts, citing legal differences of opinion with the Secretariat on the matter, and said that Member States should be pleased with Iran's early declarations on several facilities. "Give us back the DIQ for Darkhovin and we'll resubmit in six to seven years," if you want us to follow the letter of our obligations, Soltanieh scoffed.

Member States Question Purpose of
Qom and Existence of Heavy Water at the
Uranium Conversion Facility

¶8. (C) The U.K., France, Italy, Germany, Greece, and the U.S. asked technical questions following Soltanieh's opening intervention. (Comment: The active participation and implied concern shown by Italy and Greece was useful in widening the circle of demonstrated concern beyond the usual suspects. End comment.) The U.K. asked whether Iran had granted the IAEA all the access it had requested to information and people at the FFEP. Nackaerts' responded that the inspectors were told the people present at the facility had sufficient knowledge to answer any questions for the IAEA. Soltanieh also again took the floor to reiterate that there was indeed no need for inspector to talk to anyone else - the project manager for the facility could answer all questions. Furthermore, Soltanieh asserted, why should Iran provide access to individuals when they will be treated like terrorists and added to sanctions lists?

¶9. (C) Referencing the FFEP near Qom, France asked if such an "advanced centrifuge facility" could be built in 1.5 years, as Iran claims, and if a 3000 centrifuge facility could really "back-up" the 54000 centrifuge facility at Natanz. Nackaerts responded that the IAEA cannot judge how

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quickly Iran could bring a facility online, and although the cascade designs at the FFEP resemble those at Natanz, 3000 centrifuges cannot do the work of 54000 centrifuges. Nevertheless Iran has stated Qom is intended to preserve Iran's centrifuge capability in case of attack.

¶10. (C//NF) The recently arrived Italian DCM, who has worked extensively with us on Iran matters, remarked it would be more useful for the IAEA to perform the annual physical inventory verifications (PIV) and have environmental sampling results in hand before the DG's reports are written to inform Member States' consideration of Iran's safeguards compliance in a more timely manner. Italy also recalled the finding of the additional low enriched uranium (LEU) at the November 2008 PIV at Natanz (i.e., Iran had produced more LEU than previously estimated), and noted much of the information in the report on LEU production is an IAEA estimate based on Iran's declarations. Nackaerts agreed that verified results would be best to have in the reports, but noted that the processes of the PIV and environmental sampling analysis take a long time, and said all the results should be included next time for the March Board. Italy asked where the heavy water at the uranium conversion facility (UCF) came from and why was it at the UCF? Nackaerts responded that Iran had pointed out the heavy water out to the IAEA inspectors at the UCF, but the IAEA still has to verify the material is really heavy

water and receive information from Iran about where it was produced.

¶11. (C) Soltanieh intervened again to stress that Iran's Heavy Water Production Plant (HWPP) at Arak is operating and Iran is proud of this achievement, which is why it showed the heavy water to the IAEA in the first place, as a matter of cooperation and not an obligation. Greece followed up to clarify where the heavy water came from since the DG report questioned its origins. Soltanieh said Iran is the "master" of heavy water production and any heavy water seen was produced in Iran.

¶12. (C) In response to a German question about whether the IAEA could draw conclusions about the purpose of the Qom facility, Soltanieh shared - claiming, "even though I'm not supposed to do so"-- -- that Iran had shown the IAEA a document that lists the Passive Defense Organization's (PDO) full plan for backing up strategic facilities. The PDO is to be prepared to provide a location for a back-up facility for every strategically important facility in Iran, he claimed. Germany asked if the Gachin mine was in full operation. Nackaerts responded that the IAEA does not visit Gachin (given the lack of AP implementation), but the appearance of samples at the UCF that Iran attributes to Gachin and imagery of Gachin indicate production activities are taking place. Germany also asked why, if the FFEP resembled Natanz, 16 cascades equal 3000 centrifuges at the FFEP, while 18 cascades equal 3000 centrifuges at Natanz. Nackaerts replied such specific details would be inappropriate to reveal to other Member States.

¶13. (C) DCM asked for additional information on the underground analytical laboratory at the UCF, and inquired as to the IAEA's next steps with regard to possible military dimensions. DCM also asked if the transfer of equipment and materials from Natanz to the FFEP had any safeguards implications and whether such movements took place under IAEA monitoring pursuant to recently updated containment and surveillance measures requiring the IAEA to present for removal of "large items" from Natanz. Nackaerts said the IAEA has asked Iran for additional information and clarifications on the analytical laboratory, but the inspectors visited the location of the lab and it is currently empty. He said Iran remains unwilling to engage the IAEA on PMD, but the IAEA continues to further analyze the information already available to the Secretariat. Finally Nackaerts said that the transfer of equipment and materials from Natanz to the FFEP near Qom was not from the production halls that are under containment and surveillance, thus was not monitored by the IAEA. He said Iran told the IAEA that there is no storage room at the FFEP, which is why the equipment was located at Natanz first and then transferred to Qom when they needed the equipment.

¶14. (C//NF) Comment: The technical briefing evolved along familiar lines, with Soltanieh attempting to exercise an almost point by point "right of reply." In so doing, however, he did not appear successful in formulating technical arguments that would appeal to members beyond hard-core NAM. He may be more successful in intimidating some states, and some members of the Secretariat, from taking a hard line on Iran lest Tehran pull back the limited

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safeguards cooperation it is proffering.

DAVIES